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Comptroller

18 April 1962

Acting Chief, Fiscal Division

Incomplete Paperwork

1. One of the biggest problems and delaying factors in the processing of claims for payment is incomplete or poor paperwork. Not only is the processing delayed but much unnecessary time and additional paperwork is consumed in making telephone calls and writing for clarifying information or missing documents. This situation arises from three basic causes:

- a. Lack of knowledge or appreciation in the originating offices for the legal and regulatory requirements concerning documentation. This is due to inadequate communication and the absence of well planned and organized training and refresher programs to assure that those originating financial documents are aware of current requirements; technical procedures alone are not sufficient to do the job -- personal contact providing opportunity for discussion is a must.
- b. Failure to follow prescribed procedure on the part of specialists who should know better. The best example is in the Office of Logistics procurement and receiving functions; many times bills are received without purchase orders or receiving reports being available -- the follow up process is time consuming and, on occasions, a strain on relationships.
- c. Inadequate internal policy guidance to those processing claims documents, especially when new financial procedures are issued. An example of this situation is the recently issued [redacted] "Subsistence Expenses Incident to Attendance at Meetings of Professional, Technical, Scientific, and Similar Organizations". This notice provides the general policy as to the circumstances under which such expenses are to be claimed but there is no guidance to the Fiscal and Finance Divisions as to what kind of documentation or certification is required. Situations of this type lead to delays, telephone calls, irritations, and possible differences in handling between the two Divisions -- eventually we get together.

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2. In view of the foregoing it is recommended that the Office of the Comptroller:

- a. Develop and institute a training and refresher program on claims information and documentation requirements. Such a program should provide, if possible, for a tour of duty in either the Fiscal or Finance Divisions for all new employees handling fiscal matters in operating office finance or administrative units; and periodic refresher sessions for all employees handling fiscal matters to acquaint them with the latest requirements and to provide an opportunity for discussion.
- b. In connection with new or amended procedures:
  - (1) Discussion sessions be held with Office of the Comptroller and operating office employees to assure a clear understanding and uniformity of approach.
  - (2) The issuance of internal Office of the Comptroller policy and interpretation to be used as guidelines in the processing of financial documents.

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Orig. forwarded to

Finance Div. & TAS

for comments & recommendations

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